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Still this leavening and uplifting work goes on, slowly and surely, combating the evil, teaching the ignorant, straightening crooked paths, preparing a way for the Kingdom of our God, the Kingdom of righteousness and peace. Let us help by our comprehending love if we can help in no other way.

A ZULU CHRISTMAS TREE

By MARTHA S. MacNEILL

Natal, South Africa

I want to tell you civilized people about a real true Christmas tree. You should have seen my four native nurses, Elizabeth, Edna, Nomhlantze and Julia, when I suggested a Christmas Tree. "Oh, Miss MacNeill," they all exclaimed in chorus, "We have wanted one so long."

We had just closed our men's ward temporarily so that gave us a big, long room apart from the patients. Dr. McCord had a farm near Durban where most of the hospital help live. That gave us a possible place for finding a tree.

Christmas Eve, just after lunch, I took our garden boy and started for the tree. Holly trees do not grow in Africa and fir trees are scarce. There are no pines in this country so we decided to get a branch from a tree called "vemsinsi." This is a large tree with thick foliage and well adapted to the use to which we wished to put it. Margaret and I pulled down all the vines we could carry and quantities of ferns and other green things. Then we started for the hospital.

O, the joy of decorating that tree! The nurses, Mrs. McCord's housemaid and cook and my hospital cook, a few of the almost-well patients and some of the nurses' friends, had all brought their gifts and we tied them on. Dr. McCord brought over his phonograph. The natives know very little about games so we determined to give them some fun.

Soon after dinner Mrs. McCord came over and we invited all the natives in. Such delight! That Christmas tree must have seemed wonderful to them. They sometimes have them in the afternoons but I suppose a tree decorated and lighted at night was a new sight to most of them.

I left a convalescent in charge of the few ill ones we had in the hospital and we all entered into the fun. First we got a sheet, put a tiny bit of cotton wool in the center of it, arranged half of the people on each side of the sheet, holding it firmly. The object of the game was to see which side could blow the ball off the sheet on the opponents'

side. This caused shrieks of laughter. Next we played "hot potato." If none of you have played "hot potato," you have missed a treat. After that the doctor started the phonograph. This was a marvel to the natives especially so because he had made some Zulu records. When this commenced I went up stairs to take charge of the patients and allow the women to come down.

I made sure that all the patients were sleeping soundly then I seated myself comfortably at the top of the stair to read. Just as I had become deeply interested in the ghostliest part of Dickens' "Christmas Carol" I heard some mysterious noises. I looked up, and if Marley himself appeared I could not have been any more surprised. From the obstetrical ward emerged three gowned figures who were supposed to be confined to their beds. From the surgical ward appeared two black heads, one a foot case who was scarcely able to move her leg, the other a vesico-vaginal fistula case who was not allowed out of bed. When I managed to pull myself together and realize that these apparitions were not supernatural, I sent three confinement cases to bed, then went into the surgical ward. I helped two patients back to bed who of course suffered agony upon trying to move after they had been seen, and I also found a boy who had just been operated for hernia, sneaking quietly back to bed.

The cause of this eruption, as you can guess, was the phonograph. The patients evidently thought that we had something from another world. Next day the doctor took it upstairs and you should have seen the patients' faces especially when they recognized the voices of their friends who had made a few records.

This was a very, very, civilized Christmas Tree. It is interesting to hear Mrs. McCord describe some she has seen especially among the poor, partly civilized natives in the country. They sometimes suspend from the limbs squawking, live fowls, bags of beans, potatoes and other articles of food.